

Message Text

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15

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 ACDA-05 EB-07 L-02 NIC-01

SAJ-01 BIB-01 /073 W

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R 070815Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHCC 1786

SECDEF

CINCPAC

INFO DIA

CNO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 0074

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MPOL, SN

SUBJECT: SOVIET SHIPS SEMBAWANG

REFS: (A) SINGAPORE 0042 (B) SINGAPORE 0017

1. EMB OFF (NAVAL ATTACHE) TOLD BY MANAGING DIRECTOR SEMBAWANG (WATSON) ON JANUARY 6 THAT SHIPYARD HAD TURNED DOWN WORK OFFER FOR SOVIET NAVAL AUX OILER AKHTUBA. WATSON SAID THIS CAME ABOUT AFTER LOW LEVEL OBJECTION FROM UK BUT THAT REAL REASON SHIPYARD REFUSED WAS SOVIET EFFORT TO PUSH DECISION AND MISREPRESENTATION TO GOS OF AKHTUBA AS COMMERCIAL TANKER. HE SAID "THEY WERE A BIT NAUGHTY ON T IS ONE3. FURTHER INFORMED THAT AKHTUBA TOO LARGE FOR KEPPEL DRYDOCK AND AOULD GO TO URONG SHIPYARD.

2. WATSON EMPHASIZED, HOWEVER, THAT SEMBAWANG HAD FIRM INTENT TO PURSUE SOVIET SHIP REPAIR BUSINESS IN FUTURE AND TURN DOWN OF AKHTUBA WAS NOT TO BE CONSIDERED TYPICAL SHIPYARD RESPONSE.

3. WATSON ALSO COMPLAINED THAT U.S. NAVY BUSINESS NOT PROFITABLE AND UK/NZ/AUS NAVAL BUSINESS AT SEMBAWANG NOT SIGNIFICANT.

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ADDRESSES SHOULD BE AWARE THAT WATSON FORMER MANAGER KEPPEL

SHIPYARD DURING YEARS WHEN SOVIET BUSINESS IN THAT SHIPYARD
INITIATED AND GREW TO SINGLE LARGEST CUSTOMER - ABOUT 10 PER-
CENT TOTAL BUSINESS. WATSON TOLD EMBASSY OFFICER THAT HE FELT

SURE HE HAD FULL SUPPORT OF PERM SEC MINDEF (PANG), WHO IS ALSO
CHAIRMAN OF SEMBAWANG, IN GOING AFTER SOVIET BUSINESS.
CRONK

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SHIPS, SHIPYARDS, REPAIR SHOPS, NAVAL SHIPS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SINGAP00074
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750006-0009
From: SINGAPORE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750172/aaaacлкc.tel
Line Count: 68
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 SINGAPORE 0042, 75 SINGAPORE 0017
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 JUL 2003 by MartinML>; APPROVED <20 NOV 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOVIET SHIPS SEMBAWANG
TAGS: MARR, MPOL, SN
To: STATE CINCPAC
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006